



# IOWA DNR NEWS

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES | ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DIVISION

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**NOTE TO EDITORS: This is a joint press release from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and the Iowa Finance Authority.**

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DES MOINES – The Iowa Environmental Protection Commission gave the green light today to a new method of funding water quality.

“Water Resource Restoration Sponsored Projects” will help cities, watershed organizations, landowners and others address local water quality problems. A total of \$15 million will be available per year for watershed protection practices such as stream buffers, wetland restoration and green infrastructure.

The Iowa General Assembly initiated the effort in 2009 when lawmakers authorized a new funding mechanism. Previously, in Iowa Code 384.80, utility revenues could only be used for construction and improvements for the wastewater system. Now, wastewater utilities can also finance and pay for projects, within or outside the corporate limits, that cover best management practices to keep sediment, nutrients, chemicals and other pollutants out of streams and lakes.

“We hope that sponsored projects will promote greater interest in watershed issues, innovative approaches to protecting our water resources, and new partnerships,” said

Chuck Gipp, DNR director. “We strongly encourage wastewater utilities to include local watershed organizations, watershed management authorities, county conservation boards, and soil and water conservation districts in the planning and implementation of sponsored projects. “

This program will be implemented through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, a loan program for construction of water quality facilities and practices, which is jointly administered by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and the Iowa Finance Authority. The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship will provide technical assistance.

“Communities and municipalities that receive an SRF Loan and sponsor a watershed project will receive an interest rate reduction,” said Iowa Finance Authority Executive Director Dave Jamison. “Ratepayers will not pay any more than they would for the wastewater system improvements only. This program allows the unique opportunity for two water quality projects to be completed for the costs of financing one.”

A pilot project with the City of Dubuque matched a wastewater treatment upgrade with a sponsored project to repave alleys, allowing rainfall to soak in rather than running off to local streams. Environmental Protection Commission approval allows DNR and IFA to open up the program to other communities.

The application packet is posted on the [News tab](#) on [www.IowaSRF.com](http://www.IowaSRF.com), along with information about upcoming workshops for potential applicants. The application deadline is July 19, 2013.